

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs*  
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March 30, 2009

George Wislocki  
Upper Housatonic River ACEC Nominating Steering Committee  
Save the Housatonic  
P.O. Box 501  
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Dear Mr. Wislocki:

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, I designated the Upper Housatonic River Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The Upper Housatonic River ACEC covers approximately 12,275 acres in the municipalities of Lee, Lenox, Pittsfield, and Washington. The new ACEC, the 30th designated in the Commonwealth, includes a complex ecosystem comprised of the Housatonic River, adjacent wetlands and floodplains, coldwater tributary streams, large expanses of wildlife and rare species habitat, and the steep, forested, western slopes of October Mountain State Forest. The Upper Housatonic River is the fifth ACEC designated in the Berkshires, joining Schenob Brook Drainage Basin (1990), Hinsdale Flats Watershed (1992), Karner Brook Watershed (1992), and Kamposoa Bog Drainage Basin (1995). The effective date of the designation is April 8, 2009, the publication date of the notice in *The Environmental Monitor*. On that date a copy of the designation document and map may be found in the online *Environmental Monitor* at this Internet location: <http://www.mass.gov/envir/mepa/>.

The final boundary for the ACEC is the same as the boundary submitted in September 2008 with the nomination. The digital ACEC boundary will be available via the following online mapping tools:

- ACECs online viewer at <http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/acecs/pages/main.jsp>,
- "Oliver," an interactive online data viewer, at [http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/massgis\\_viewer/index.htm](http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/massgis_viewer/index.htm), and
- The ACEC data layer that can be downloaded from the MassGIS web site at <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/acecs.htm>



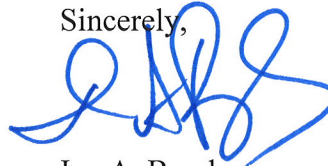
A public meeting to answer questions about the new ACEC designation and discuss the formation of a volunteer stewardship committee will be held this spring. The ACEC Program will work with you and other nominators to determine the date, time, and place. The ACEC Program will notify the Upper Housatonic River ACEC email distribution list of that schedule.

Under separate cover, you will receive a copy of the ACEC designation document and map, which provide important details about the ACEC designation. Copies will also be sent to municipal boards and commissions in the designated area. Digital copies will be available at the *Environmental Monitor* link above and the ACEC website and will be sent to the email distribution list. The document provides important details about the significant natural resources, the nomination process, and the designation decision.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you, and all the nominators, for your concerted efforts throughout the nomination preparation and public review process. I am grateful for your participation and commitment to preserve, restore, and enhance the natural and cultural resources in this ACEC.

If you have any questions, I encourage you to contact ACEC Program Director Elizabeth Sorenson, at (617) 626-1394, or by email at [elizabeth.sorenson@state.ma.us](mailto:elizabeth.sorenson@state.ma.us). Information about the ACEC Program is also available at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/acec/index.htm>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ian A. Bowles', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Ian A. Bowles  
Secretary